Adopted: May 3 2011

ACADEMIC SENATE
of
CALIFORNIA POLYTECHNIC STATE UNIVERSITY
San Luis Obispo, CA

AS-729-11

RESOLUTION ON PROPOSED NEW DEGREE PROGRAM: BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN AGRICULTURAL COMMUNICATION

RESOLVED That the proposed new degree program, **Bachelor of Science in Agricultural Communication**, be approved.

Proposed by: Agricultural Education and Communication Department
Date: February 16 2011

Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo

Summary of Statement of Proposed New Degree Program

February 16, 2011

1. Title of proposed program:

Bachelor of Science degree in Agricultural Communication

2. Reason for proposing the program:

The Bachelor of Science degree in Agricultural Communication was developed to address a specific need within the agriculture industry and fill the void created by not having a degree in Agricultural Communication in existence within the CSU system and California. Industry professionals, including the members of the Industry Advisory Council of the Agricultural Education and Communication Department, note a need for professional communicators with a specific knowledge of the complex agronomic, environmental and economic conditions within the agriculture industry. As a major California industry, agriculture plays a pivotal role in our state's economic future. This degree is being developed to assist the industry in the daunting task of communicating the importance of the food and fiber system to its more than 37 million citizens of the State.

In a college-wide strategic visioning activity, the College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences' faculty and staff identified the increasing need for social, people and communication skills. Additionally, participants recognized the need for industry and academic partnerships. The declining public image of agriculture was identified as a social trend.

The Agricultural Communication major will help the college address its strategic plan by enhancing the students' ability to communicate effectively. The students will be provided instruction within the classroom, as well as being provided experiential opportunities both on- and off-campus to further develop their communication skills. Experiential opportunities include such things as internships, work experience, and collaborative assignments in the Brock Center for Agricultural Communication.

3. Expected student learning outcomes and methods for assessing outcomes:

Learning Outcomes – Upon successful completion of the program, students will be able to:

A. Demonstrate and apply excellent written, verbal, listening and visual communication skills.

B. Demonstrate knowledge of current communications practices, including effective writing, layout and design, photography, computer skills, and oral communication.

C. Demonstrate the ability to work in a professional communication setting through experiential-learning (i.e. internships, work experience, student organizations).

D. Analyze and communicate effectively about major issues in agriculture, including the acquisition of information from credible sources and distilling it into proper form for distribution.

E. Understand the importance of effective communication in the agriculture industry.

F. Use and evaluate technologies that enhance the communication process.

G. Apply ethical practices in daily work and recognize media and corporate roles and responsibilities in the industry and society.

H. Demonstrate awareness and sensitivity to cultural demographics of an increasingly global agriculture industry.

I. Develop a high degree of agricultural literacy and an adequate reservoir of skills and knowledge in agricultural subjects to meet the need of the agricultural communication profession and the industry.

   a. **Agricultural Business and Economics** – Demonstrate an understanding of a range of topics in agricultural business including marketing, agricultural economics and government policies that affect agricultural business.

   b. **Agricultural Systems Technology** – Demonstrate an understanding of a range of topics in agricultural systems including safety principles and practices, and operation of power equipment.

   c. **Animal Science** – Demonstrate an understanding of animal production practices and animal facilities management.

   d. **Environment and Natural Resources** – Demonstrate an understanding of the principles of sustainability and the relationship between agriculture, the environment and society.

   e. **Food Science** – Demonstrate an understanding of food processing and food safety.

   f. **Plant Science** – Demonstrate an understanding of topics in plant science, including plant nutrition, crop production practices and emerging technologies.

   g. **Agricultural Issues** – Demonstrate an understanding of the current issues affecting agriculture.

Assessment Methods

Scoring Rubrics: Scoring rubrics were developed for each embedded signature assignment in each course offered with the AGC prefix.

Constituent assessments – Assessments of learning outcome achievements by important constituency groups such as members of agricultural and related industries, alumni, and graduating seniors help determine our success in achieving the desired learning outcomes and guide program improvement. Feedback from the industry advisory council and surveys will be employed.

Feedback Mechanisms

Curriculum improvement – A departmental curriculum committee evaluates the data collected and implements curricular adjustments (may include revisions of course content, development of new courses, or revisions of requirements or sequencing) to increase learning outcome achievement levels.

Student evaluations – Faculty will utilize the feedback from student evaluations to guide improvements in teaching techniques, learning activities, equipment, and alterations in course content or emphasis to improve each course's ability to foster the desired outcomes.

Direct student involvement in funding decisions – The student fee committee in the department will make recommendations regarding the expenditures of funds to improve the program and enhance student learning experiences.

Industry Advisory Council – The program will be annually reviewed by a group of industry professionals/experts.

4. Anticipated student demand:

	Number of Students		
	at initiation	3 years after initiation	5 years after initiation
Number of Majors	40	100	150
Number of Graduates	0	30	75

Indicate briefly what these projections are based upon:

Given the history of the Agricultural Communication minor, it is anticipated the students at the initiation of this major will come primarily from the Agricultural Science major. A few students currently pursuing a minor in Agricultural Communications may also decide to pursue the major instead.

5. If additional resources (faculty, student allocations, support staff, facilities, equipment, etc.) will be required, please identify the resources needed and from where you expect them to come:

There is no anticipated need for any additional resources. In fact, the students currently pursuing their interest in Agricultural Communication through the Agricultural Sciences major must complete 192 units to graduate. This major requires only 180 units. The program is more likely to initially decrease resource needs rather than increase the resources required.

6. If the program is occupational or professional, briefly summarize evidence of need for graduates with this specific education background:

The students who have earned the minor in agricultural communications have enjoyed a favorable job market. Anecdotally, some of the top students are in positions of influence in the agricultural policy arena. The last three California Secretaries of Agriculture and a former Governor have employed our graduates as a part of their communication team. Other alumni with the agricultural communication minors own public relations agencies or communication firms.

7. If the new program is currently a concentration or specialization, include a brief rationale for conversion:

Cal Poly currently offers a minor in Agricultural Communication with approximately 40 students enrolled. The conversion primarily affects students enrolled in the Agricultural Science major with a Career Area Path of Agricultural Communication. Such students would experience a change in degree requirements from 192 units to 180 units to graduation.

8. **If the new program is not commonly offered as a bachelor's or master's degree, provide a brief, compelling rationale explaining how the proposed subject area constitutes a coherent, integrated degree major which has potential value for students:**

No campus in the California State University System offers a degree in Agricultural Communication. No other CSU campus offers *a minor* in agricultural communication; however, CSU Chico and CSU Fresno allow students to focus their studies in agricultural communication within the agricultural education major.

In Land Grant Universities across the United States, agricultural communication has emerged as a separate and distinct discipline. Some of the notable universities with agricultural communication majors include The Ohio State University, Texas A&M University, Kansas State University, Oklahoma State University, University of Florida, University of Missouri-Columbia, and others.

There are twenty chapters of Agricultural Communicators of Tomorrow (ACT) with close to 400 student members. The ACT is a widely recognized student professional organization within the agricultural communication profession. Cal Poly has had a highly successful ACT chapter for many years. Three former Cal Poly students have served as national officers of the ACT association

9. **Briefly describe how the new program fits with the mission and/or strategic plan for the department, college, and university:**

Campus Mission
Cal Poly fosters teaching, scholarship, and service in a learn-by-doing environment where students and faculty are partners in discovery. As a polytechnic university, Cal Poly promotes the application of theory to practice. As a comprehensive institution, Cal Poly provides a balanced education in the arts, sciences, and technology, while encouraging cross-disciplinary and co-curricular experiences. As an academic community, Cal Poly values free inquiry, cultural and intellectual diversity, mutual respect, civic engagement, and social and environmental responsibility.

The agricultural communication major fits with the campus mission by fulfilling the following specific provisions:

- By applying communication theory to practical projects in agricultural communication;
- By offering a broad-based curriculum; and
- By emphasizing ethics in mass media.

CAFES Strategic Plan
In a college-wide strategic visioning activity, the College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences' faculty and staff identified the increasing need for social, people and communication skills. Additionally, participants recognized the need for industry and academic partnerships. The declining public image of agriculture was identified as a social trend.

Following this activity, core values for the College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences emerged. Leadership development was highlighted as one of the core values. The statement in the document reads, "*we emphasize student leadership and the development of management skills, particularly as they relate to communication, cooperation and teamwork*".

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BS AGRICULTURAL COMMUNICATION

MAJOR COURSES	
AGC 102 Orientation to Agricultural Communication	2
AGC 339 Internship in Agricultural Communication	4
AGC 407 Agricultural Publications	4
AGC 426 Presentation Methods in Agricultural Communication	4
AGED 404 Agricultural Leadership	3
Senior Project AGED 460 Research Methodology (1) AGC 461 Senior Project I (1) AGC 462 Senior Project II (1)	3
BIO 111 General Biology *or* BIO 161 Introduction to Cell & Molecular Biology (B2/B4)*	4
CHEM 110 World of Chemistry (B3/B4)*	4
COMS 301 Business & Professional Communication	4
COMS 416 Intercultural Communication *(USCP)*	4
ECON 222 Macroeconomics (D2)*	4
ENGL 310 Corporate Communication	4
GRC 377 Web and Print Publishing *or* JOUR 390 Visual Communication for the Mass Media	4
JOUR 203 News Reporting and Writing	4
JOUR 205 Agricultural Communications	4
JOUR 312 Intro to Public Relations	4
MATH 118 Pre-Calculus Algebra or MATH 116/117 (B1)*	4
STAT 217 Introduction to Statistical Concepts and Methods *or* STAT 218 Applied Statistics for the Life Sciences (B1)*	4
Agricultural Business & Economics AGB 212 Agricultural Economics (4) AGB 301 Food and Fiber Marketing (4) AGB 312 Agricultural Policy (4)	12
Agricultural Systems Technology BRAE 121 Agricultural Mechanics (2) BRAE 141 Agricultural Machinery Safety (3)	5
Animal Science ASCI 112 Principles of Animal Science (4) Choose 1 additional: ASCI 221 Intro to Beef Production (4) ASCI 222 Systems of Swine Production (4) ASCI 223 Systems of Sheep Mgmt (4) ASCI 224 Equine Science (4) DSCI 230 General Dairy Husbandry (4) PM 225 Intro to Poultry Management (4)	8
Diversity in Agriculture AGB 401 Managing Cultural Diversity in Ag. Labor Relations	4
Environment and Natural Resources SS 121 Intro to Soil Science (4) AG 360 Holistic Management (4) (F)* BRAE 340 Irrigation Water Management (4) Choose 1 additional: (D5)* NR 308 Fire and Society (4) NR 323 Human Dimensions in Natural Resources Mgmt (4)	16
Food Science FSN 230 Elements of Food Processing (4)	8
FSN 275 Principles of Food Safety and Hazard Analysis (4)	
Plant Science HCS 120 Principles of Horticulture and Crop Science	4
Agricultural Issues Choose 1 course: AG 452 Issues Affecting California Agriculture ASCI 476 Issues in Animal Agriculture BOT 329/HCS 329 Plants, Food and Biotechnology	4
Electives – 7 units selected to enhance expertise in any area of study. Limited to maximum of 3 units of special problems and enterprise projects.	7
Total Major Units	**13 6**

GENERAL EDUCATION 72 required; 28 units in major Min of 12 units required at 300-400 level	
Area A Communication	**12**
A1 ENGL 133/134	4
A2 COMS 101/102	4
A3 Reasoning, Argumentation and Writing	4
Area B Science and Math	**0**
B1 Math/Stats (in major)	0
B2 Life Science (in major)	0
B3 Physical Science (in major)	0
B4 Lab taken with either B2 or B3	0
Area C Arts and Humanities	**20**
C1 Literature	4
C2 Philosophy	4
C3 Fine/Performing Art	4
C4 Upper Division Elective	4
Area C Elective (any class from C1-C4)	4
Area D/E Society and the Individual	**12**
D1 American Experience	4
D2 Political Economy (in major)	0
D3 Comparative Social Institutions	4
D4 Self Development (CSU Area E)	4
D5 Upper Division Elective (in major)	0
Area F Technology Elective	**0**
Area F (in major)	0
Total GE	**44**
Total Units	**180**

State of California
Memorandum

CAL POLY
SAN LUIS OBISPO
CA 93407

To: Rachel Fernflores
Chair, Academic Senate

Date: June 20, 2011

From: Jeffrey D. Armstrong
President

Copies R. Koob, E. Smith, D. Wehner, W. Kellogg, C. Sunata, S. Olivas, D. Lencioni

Subject Response to Academic Senate Resolution AS-729-11
Resolution on Proposed New Degree Program: Bachelor of Science in Agricultural Communication

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I am pleased to approve the above-subject Academic Senate resolution. By copy of this memo, I request that Cal Poly's Office of Programs and Planning send the proposal to the Chancellor's Office for final approval.

Please convey my appreciation to the Academic Senate members for their attention to this important curricular matter.